

# Regional Approach to Adaptation to Climate Change in Burkina Faso

Study of the Central Plateau region



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## Key Messages

- In the Central Plateau region, adaptation interventions are required to combat droughts, extreme heat, and floods, which cause soil degradation, crop loss, and multiple health problems.
- Priority actions, although primarily aimed at smallholder farmers and pastoralists in the Central Plateau region, need to be targeted at people with reduced mobility, the elderly, and women, who are often the most affected by climate change.
- The recommended regional approach, which makes it possible to refine the results of risk and vulnerability assessments (RVAs), nevertheless requires considerable financial and human resources for its preparation, implementation, and subsequent analysis.
- To guarantee the success of the regional approach, regional stakeholders should be at the heart of the regional adaptation plan (RAP) process and should have their capacities strengthened since they are responsible for the implementation and revision of the RAP.

## Introduction

Development of a National Adaptation Plan (NAP) is a strategic process that allows countries to identify and respond to their medium- and long-term climate change adaptation priorities (Hammill et al., 2020). Burkina Faso, a country particularly affected by the effects of climate change, used a sectoral approach to develop its first NAP in 2015. An evaluation of the plan was conducted in 2021 to guide further actions. To take better account of the specificities of each region of the country, this time, a regional approach was recommended to complement the original sectoral approach. With this in mind, Burkina

Faso, with the financial support of the NAP Global Network, conducted an RVA in the Central Plateau region (Figure 1), chosen from among the country's 13 regions for piloting the regional approach. The RVA led to the development of the Central Plateau RAP. This plan, together with those of the other 12 regions, will ultimately feed into the NAP. This document describes the specificities of the regional approach implemented in Burkina Faso and presents the lessons that have been learned from the pilot phase.

**Figure 1. Location of the Central Plateau region**



Source: Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie. (2022 b).

## Methodology and RVA

To operationalize the regional approach in Burkina Faso, it was necessary to develop a standardized method replicable in space and time, in particular for the conduct of the RVA (Zoungrana et al., 2023). Under this method, the vulnerability assessment is based on the conceptual framework for analysis, presented in the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In fact, with regard to the conceptual framework, it is the approach followed in the AR4 report (not that of the AR5 report) that is most used to analyze vulnerability (Fritzsche et al., 2015). Furthermore, it is appropriate to the context of Burkina Faso, where the determination of vulnerabilities remains essential for the purpose of guiding and ranking the highest-priority adaptation actions. According to this framework, vulnerability is a function of exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity (Fritzsche et al., 2015).

Household surveys and resource-person interviews were used to determine the region's sensitivity and adaptive capacity, while exposure was captured by processing climate data. The Central Plateau Region RVA revealed exposure to droughts, extreme temperatures, and floods. Over the periods 2021–2050 and 2051–2080, droughts are anticipated to either decrease or remain stable. Conversely, flooding and extreme heat are projected to rise. The agriculture,

water resources, livestock, environment, and health sectors are the most vulnerable to climate change. At the local population level, adaptation actions must target smallholder farmers and pastoralists and, especially, people with reduced mobility, the elderly, and women, who are the most vulnerable.

The results of the RVA, complemented by consultations with experts and resource persons and a literature review, were used to draw up a list of priority adaptation measures, in particular through a multi-criteria analysis. These priority adaptation measures served as the basis for the development of the Central Plateau RAP, which was validated through workshops attended by various regional and national stakeholders.

### Box 1. The Central Plateau region (Burkina Faso) RAP at a glance

**Period:** 2024–2028

**Lead entity:** Regional Council of the Central Plateau

**Priority sectors:** Agriculture, water resources, livestock, environment, and health

**Number of priority adaptation actions identified:** 44

## Integration and Capacity Building of Regional Stakeholders in the RAP Process

Implementation of the regional approach presupposes the constant involvement of regional stakeholders in order to ensure the success of the RAP process and ownership by these stakeholders.

In the case of Burkina Faso, regional stakeholders were involved from the start of the RVA through to the development of the RAP. All stakeholders in the Central Plateau pilot region took part in the process, including representatives of decentralized state services, territorial authorities and civil society organizations (including those of vulnerable groups such as women, people with reduced mobility, etc.), non-governmental organizations, projects, and programs active in the region, technical and financial partners,

the private sector, customary authorities, and the local population. These stakeholders were approached for the conducting of the RVAs (data collection and report validation workshops) and will continue to be invited to take part during the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the RAP.

Mobilization of regional actors and of the required technical and financial resources is, therefore, essential for the conduct of the RVAs and implementation of the RAP. In addition, to ensure the success of the regional approach and its ownership by regional stakeholders, these stakeholders must be at the heart of the process and must strengthen their skills because they are responsible for its implementation and review.

## Conclusion and Lessons Learned

The RAP process is demanding in terms of preparation and implementation, requiring the commitment of considerable human and financial resources. The Central Plateau region pilot needed approximately 1 year's work (for the RVA and preparation of the plan).

However, a well-designed RAP will facilitate the development of the NAP, which involves the recruitment of experts in different branches of adaptation to climate change, the development of a standard and replicable methodology for the RVA, good financial management of the budget, and close collaboration between regional and national stakeholders as well as with resource persons.

As some countries are more advanced in implementing the regional approach, their experience may also be useful. Moreover, in terms of operational and technical requirements, it will be necessary to

- recruit knowledgeable and highly competent consultants with good support from the sponsor and/or beneficiary;
- ensure good coverage of the region in order to have a critical mass of data, which requires time and resource mobilization;
- ensure proper planning of activities, allowing sufficient time for data collection.

The RVAs and RAPs of three other regions are already underway, thanks to the support of the Global Green Growth Institute. For it to be possible to have RAPs for all 13 regions of Burkina Faso in the medium term (2030), the following work will be required:

- In the NAP, whose review is in the final phase, present the Central Plateau RAP as a model on which future plans of other regions can be based.
- Mobilize the necessary resources for the development of other regions' RVAs and RAPs, taking lessons learned from the Central Plateau process.

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The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Network's funders.



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